



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES

Public Health Service

Food and Drug Administration
Rockville MD 20857

0849 02 15 22 16

August 13, 2002

Mr. Howard M. Crosby
8401 9th Street North Suite #E
St. Petersburg, FL 33702

Dear Mr. Crosby:

This is in response to your June 26 letter to Secretary Thompson on the protection of the food supply since September 11. Your letter was referred to the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) for response.

As you know, the events of September 11, 2001 reinforced the need to enhance the security of the United States food supply. Congress responded by passing the Public Health Security and Bioterrorism Preparedness and Response Act of 2002 (Bioterrorism Act), which President Bush signed into law on June 12, 2002. Title III of the Bioterrorism Act, entitled "Protecting Safety and Security of Food and Drug Supply" requires the Secretary of Health and Human Services, through FDA to, issue final regulations for four provisions, one of which addresses the issue of country of origin labeling. In a July 17 "Dear Colleague" letter sent to the FDA Foods Community (copy attached), we describe the agency's efforts to meet the food security provisions of the Bioterrorism Act. You may want to obtain a full copy of the Bioterrorism Act at <http://thomas.doc.gov>, searching with Bill number H.R. 3448.

In addition to issuing regulations on these provisions by December 12, 2003, FDA stands ready to inform the foods community on how it will be proceeding, and soliciting comment and suggestions from the food community on how to best communicate those concerns. The agency is committed to publishing regulations by the end of this calendar year, and we plan to offer at least a 60-day comment period. Your input as we develop the proposed and final regulations is important to us.

In addition, we are planning to hold several public meetings at various locations across the country to explain the proposed regulatory requirements, answer questions, and receive additional comment. Also, we have opened public dockets for each regulation

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and are ready to receive your input. Instructions for how to submit comments to the docket are found in the enclosed “Dear Colleague” letter. Meanwhile, we are sending a copy of your letter to Docket No. 02N-0278 associated with section 307 concerning prior notice (country of origin labeling) of imported food shipments.

I hope this information is helpful. The agency appreciates hearing from you.

Sincerely yours,

Vicky Wolfhard
FDA Executive Secretariat

Enclosure
Dear Colleague Letter – 7/17/02